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SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR CA/FPP (BILLINGSR), CA/VO/F/P, DS/CR/VG, EUR/UMB, G/TIP
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SUBJECT: UKRAINE: 2009 SUMMER WORK AND TRAVEL VALIDATION STUDY
RESULTS-OVERSTAYS UP

REF: A) KYIV 1102 B) KYIV 1271

11. (U) SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

12. (SBU) Summary: Embassy Kyiv concluded a validation study of J1 summer work and travel/camp counselor ("SWT") visas issued for the 2009 program. During this time period, Post issued 7011 SWT visas. The validation study showed a total overstay rate of 11.3 percent, with a 3.8 percent margin of error. The overstay rate following the 2008 SWT season was 6.4, while the overstay rate from the 2007 SWT season was 14.3 percent. Thus, Post experienced an increase in the SWT overstay rate this season, although the rate was still lower than the 2007 season. This trend tracks with the economic fluctuations in Ukraine. Ukraine was at the peak of its economic growth in 2008, but by the beginning of the 2009 season was suffering the effects of the worst economic contraction in the Central and Eastern Europe (Ref A). End summary.

SAMPLE, DATA COLLECTION, AND METHODOLOGY

13. (U) Post conducted its validation study on 608 randomly selected applicants from the pool of 7011 J1 SWT issuances from January 13 to June 20, 2009. Post submitted the sample group to CA/FPP for computer verification of entry/exit records. In two cases (.3 percent), computer records showed no travel by the applicant. Post refused approximately 1200 SWT applicants (15 percent of all SWT applicants) during the 2009 season, most often because the applicants failed to demonstrate sufficient ability to speak English. (Ref B) The validation study was conducted with a 95 percent confidence rate and a margin of error of 3.8 percent.

RESULTS

14. (U) As of November 19, 2009, Post confirmed that 11.3 percent (69 out of the 608 in the sample) of applicants issued during the study period stayed in the United States. Most of these overstays (41 out of 69, or 6.7 percent of the total study sample) were "illegal" overstays, meaning the applicants in question did not adjust status. The remaining 28 adjusted to B2 status, F1 status, or were pending an adjustment at the conclusion of the study period.

15. (U) The 11.3 percent overstay rate reflects a dramatic increase from last year's SWT overstay rate of 6.4 percent (2.8 percent illegal, 3.5 percent legal), but a decrease over the 2007 SWT overstay rate of 14.3 percent (7.7 percent illegal, 6.6 percent legal).

PROFILE OF TRAVELERS WHO OVERSTAYED

16. (SBU) Participants who overstayed in 2009 were more likely to be repeat SWT participants, female, from more economically depressed regions in western and central Ukraine, and/or in their fourth or fifth year of university. (Note: In the Ukrainian system, the final

year of university could be either the fourth or fifth year. End note.) Nearly half of all students who stayed in the United States were humanities majors, and students intending to work in warmer southern or western states were more likely to overstay.

17. (SBU) Post reports below the statistics concerning the 2009 SWT travelers who stayed in the United States. The first column contains the demographic category in question; the second column contains the percentage of the study sample comprised of this demographic; the third column contains the percentage of this demographic that overstayed; and the fourth column contains the percentage of all overstays represented by the demographic in question.

Gender: Pct. Pct. who Pct. of all
of sample: overstayed: overstays:

Male	42.4	7.4	37.7
Female	57.6	6.6	62.3

Year in Univ.:

1st-year student	1.0	16.7	1.4
2nd-year student	28.9	6.3	15.9
3rd-year student	43.1	7.3	27.5
4th-year student	16.3	22.2	31.9
5th-year student	10.5	23.4	21.7
6th-year student	.2	100.0	1.4

Major:

Humanities	41.8	12.6	46.4
Business	34.4	7.7	23.2

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Engineering	14.0	12.9	15.9
IT	4.9	16.7	7.2
Science	4.8	13.8	5.8
Agriculture	.2	100.0	1.4

Region of
Ukraine:

Zakarpattia	.8	60.0	4.3
Chernivtsi	2.0	41.7	7.2
Kirovograd	.7	25.0	1.4
Ternopil	4.1	24.0	8.7
Lugansk	3.5	19.0	5.8
Lviv	7.9	16.7	11.6
Mikolaiv	2.0	16.7	2.9
Vinnitsa	1.0	16.7	1.4
Zhitomyr	2.1	15.4	2.9
Kharkiv	8.1	14.3	10.1
Cherkassy	3.5	14.3	4.3
Kherson	2.5	13.3	2.9
Ivano Frankivsk	4.4	11.1	4.3
Poltava	1.5	11.1	1.4
Zaporizhzhya	3.1	10.5	2.9
Sumy	3.9	8.3	2.9
Dnipropetrovsk	6.6	7.5	4.3
Kyiv (incl. city)	24.8	7.3	15.9
Odesa	3.0	5.6	1.4
Donetsk	3.1	5.3	1.4
Crimea	5.4	3.0	1.4
Chernigiv	1.0	0.0	0.0

Top overstay
destinations:

Tennessee	1.0	33.3	2.9
Louisiana	1.2	28.6	2.9
Georgia	.7	25.0	1.4
California	3.3	20.0	5.8
Nevada	.8	20.0	1.4
Colorado	1.8	18.2	2.9
Massachusetts	3.8	17.4	5.8
Wisconsin	3.0	16.7	4.3

Illinois	1.0	16.7	1.4
Alabama	1.0	16.7	1.4

Post also collected data on overstay rates by student travel agency and university, to assist future adjudications.

COMMENT

18. (SBU) Comment: Though Post tightened its anti-fraud screening of applicants this year (Ref B), the overstay rate increased. Post attributes this increase primarily to the widespread effects of the economic crisis in Ukraine, which sharply increased unemployment in Ukraine. (Ref A) Relatively few students remained in the United States at the height of Ukraine's economic growth in 2008. Post will use this data to further refine its screening procedures, anti-fraud efforts, and SWT adjudications in 2010. Post has already initiated SWT outreach, including new outreach directly to students, to educate SWT agencies and students about the visa process and the consequences of fraud. End comment.

TEFFT